

DECREE OF MERGER

In Nomine Domini. Amen.

Upon the recommendation of Reverend Bryan K. Parrish, Pastor of Saint Bartholomew Parish and Saint Joseph Parish, both territorial parishes in Needham, Massachusetts; and with the concurrence of Very Reverend Richard E. Cannon, Vicar Forane; and Most Reverend Robert P. Reed, Regional Bishop for the West Region of the Archdiocese of Boston ("Archdiocese"), and after a thorough study of the pastoral situation of the parishes in the Vicariate and an extensive consultation of the Christian faithful in the parishes and neighboring area;

Having presented all pertinent and necessary information to the Presbyteral Council of the Archdiocese on November 2, 2023, and having heard the same Council in accord with canon 515 §2, with careful consideration of the pastoral study, the pastoral plan of the Archdiocese, *Disciples in Mission*, of the just and serious reasons for merging the parishes, and of the consultation of the faithful, with dutiful concern for the spiritual needs of the Catholic community in Needham, Massachusetts and of the whole Archdiocese of Boston;

I hereby decree the merger of Saint Bartholomew Parish into, and with, Saint Joseph Parish in Needham, Massachusetts. The new merged parish will continue to be known as SAINT JOSEPH PARISH in Needham, Massachusetts.

The just and serious reasons that motivate this action include the diminishing Mass attendance and reduced sacramental vitality at Saint Bartholomew Parish, as well as its diminished revenue compared to steady and ongoing expenses, the need to reduce duplication of priestly ministry and staff work currently performed by Saint Joseph Parish for both Saint Bartholomew and Saint Joseph Parishes, and the urgency of merging Saint Bartholomew Parish into the larger and thriving Saint Joseph Parish, as well as the ability for a merged parish to make the resources of the thriving Saint Joseph Parish more accessible to the community worshipping at Saint Bartholomew Parish and thus improving the pastoral and spiritual welfare of the faithful and the mission of the Catholic Church in the town of Needham, Massachusetts;

I further decree that:

The canonical registers of Saint Bartholomew Parish, Needham, Massachusetts, and Saint Joseph Parish, Needham, Massachusetts, are to be kept at the offices of SAINT JOSEPH PARISH, Needham, Massachusetts, until collection by the Archdiocesan Archives;

The territories of Saint Bartholomew Parish, Needham, Massachusetts and Saint Joseph Parish, Needham, Massachusetts, become the territory of SAINT JOSEPH PARISH, Needham, Massachusetts;

The goods and obligations of Saint Bartholomew Parish, Needham, Massachusetts and Saint Joseph Parish, Needham, Massachusetts, become the goods and obligations of SAINT JOSEPH PARISH Needham, Massachusetts.

This decree is to be notified to the Pastor and to the Faithful of both parishes. A petition for revocation or emendation of this decree is subject to the applicable canons (CIC, cc. 1732-1739).

This decree shall be effective at 12:01 AM on July 1, 2024. Given at the Pastoral Center of the Archdiocese of Boston in Braintree, Massachusetts, this 28th day of December, 2023.


Archbishop of Boston


Chancellor

